

Efforts to bring superior education to all of West Virginia and America are among our top priorities. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring Conner Street Elementary.

AMEND TITLE 49 OF THE UNITED STATES CODE SO AIRPORT SCREENING PERSONNEL CAN BE U.S. CITIZENS OR NATIONALS

HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 12, 2001

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation to amend Title 49 of the United States Code so that the airport security screening personnel referred to in Section 44935 of that Title can be U.S. citizens or nationals.

American Samoa is the only place in the United States in which persons born of non-U.S. citizen parents acquire the political status of U.S. national, as opposed to that of U.S. citizen. According to the most recent data available, only 5.7 percent of American Samoa's population are U.S. citizens, with the vast majority being U.S. nationals.

Enactment of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act into law last month added a requirement that all security screening personnel at airports be U.S. citizens. While I understand and strongly support Congressional intent to improve the quality of the security screening of baggage being put aboard commercial aircraft, I do believe the issue of U.S. nationals should be considered as part of the recent change.

The U.S. nationals from American Samoa have a 100-year history of service to the United States. Just like citizens, these Americans owe their allegiance to the United States and have repeatedly demonstrated their allegiance in important ways. They are not foreign nationals, yet because of this one criterion placed on the hiring of security screening personnel, they will be treated as foreigners if this new requirement added in the Aviation and Transportation Security Act is not amended.

With such a small number of U.S. citizens available in the American Samoa work force, the requirement in the Aviation and Transportation Security Act that security screening personnel be U.S. citizens also greatly reduces the pool of prospective employees. As a practical matter, this will be to the detriment of airline security on all flights within the region, thereby reducing, rather than increasing, security of the traveling public.

Mr. Speaker, I see this amendment as a technical change to the law, and look forward to prompt passage so that security at the airport in American Samoa will remain strong.

HOMELESS VETERANS COMPREHENSIVE ASSISTANCE ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 11, 2001

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2716, the

Homeless Veterans Comprehensive Assistance Act. Homelessness remains a prevalent problem among veterans, with roughly one-third of the total homeless population consisting of veterans. With this legislation, we will take a needed step in addressing this problem as we are all aware that more needs to be done to help these men and women get back on their feet.

It is a familiar principle among veterans in our Armed Forces that we do not leave our wounded behind. Homeless veterans are our wounded, and we are leaving them behind. The VA has reported there were about 345,000 homeless vets in our country in 1999, and there will yet be even more homeless veterans as we experience this economic downturn.

This bill sets a national goal to end homelessness among veterans within 10 years. Who is opposed to that? The bill provides funding, authorizes 2000 additional Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Section 8 low-income housing vouchers over four years for homeless veterans in need of permanent housing and who are enrolled in health care provided by the Veterans Affairs Department. The bill contains funding increases for a number of existing veterans homeless programs. It will establish a demonstration program to provide information, including referral and counseling services, to incarcerated veterans and veterans in long-term institutional confinement to assist in their reintegration into their communities.

As we continue to address the needs of our Nation's veterans we should heed the words of President Lincoln who called on all Americans "to care for him who shall have borne the battle." I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

**TRIBUTE TO CONFIDENCE
ELEMENTARY**

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 12, 2001

Mrs. CAPITO. Mrs. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Confidence Elementary in recognition of their achievement as an "exemplary" school.

Confidence Elementary has been selected as one of the top 50 schools of West Virginia. "Exemplary" status is based on Stanford Achievement Test results, attendance, drop out rates, and writing exam scores.

I commend the leadership and faculty on their dedication to the children that walk through their doors each day. They have set an incredible example for the other 817 schools in West Virginia.

I equally commend the students and parents of Confidence Elementary for their commitment to a quality education and a bright future.

Efforts to bring superior education to all of West Virginia and America are among our top priorities. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring Confidence Elementary.

**BILL OF RIGHTS CANNOT BE THE
NEXT VICTIM OF TERRORISM**

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 12, 2001

Mr. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, the terrorist attacks on September 11 struck fear in the heart of every American. Today, we continue to fight a war against terrorism on two fronts—in the mountains of Afghanistan and on the main streets of the United States. The first is a more traditional war against soldiers and war machinery; the second, a war against domestic terrorism.

Within days of the attacks, Congress passed a Homeland Security Bill that included the so-called "Patriot Act." The Patriot Act allows the government to increase its use of wiretaps and surveillance, and enhances its ability to trace e-mail and Internet usage. I voted against the Patriot Act because it intrudes unnecessarily on our civil liberties. We had adequate police and intelligence systems available to prevent 9/11, but they were not used effectively. The inadequate use of these resources is no reason to trample our freedoms.

The Bill of Rights, civil rights and civil liberties must not be the "other victim" of terrorism. As the domestic war against terrorism continues, my concern is that "increased police power" will encroach on our liberties.

In the past month, Attorney General John Ashcroft issued rules to allow the FBI to eavesdrop on communications between attorneys and their clients who are suspected terrorists, ordered prosecutors to interview over 5,000 young, mostly Middle Eastern men in the United States, and supported a system of secret military tribunals that could be used to try alleged accomplices in the September 11 attacks.

Members of Congress and eight former high-ranking FBI officials have questioned the effectiveness of Attorney General Ashcroft's plan to fight terrorism. The tactics that he is proposing are not new. By interviewing over 5,000 mostly Middle Eastern men to gather information about terrorists, he is merely recycling the same "preventive" intelligence-gathering techniques that were rejected in the late 1970s because they did not prevent terrorism and in fact, led to abuses of civil liberties.

In the 1950's and 1960's, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover used "Red Squads" to collect massive amounts of "preventive" intelligence to deter terrorist attacks. The "Squads" were criticized for abusing civil liberties and they were seldom effective. Because the majority of preventive intelligence investigations did not lead to criminal cases, most terrorist activities went unsolved and most of the terrorists were not apprehended. There is no reason to return to a system that didn't work and has a track record of failure and abuse.

Attorney General Ashcroft wants terrorist suspects to be tried by secret military tribunals. Conducting the tribunals in secret with the possibility of imposing capital punishment by a mere two-thirds vote, is an infringement of our civil liberties. It also undermines our system of checks and balances. Our Democracy retains its integrity in large part because no single branch of government overwhelms another. The military tribunals circumvent the